

SAS mission statement

To reduce collisions of ships and right whales within the U.S. EEZ from North Carolina north through Maine by:

- ➔ Providing regularly scheduled aerial surveys to locate right whales
- ➔ Providing mariners with up-to-date locations of right whale sightings

SAS components

Collecting sighting reports

Processing sighting reports

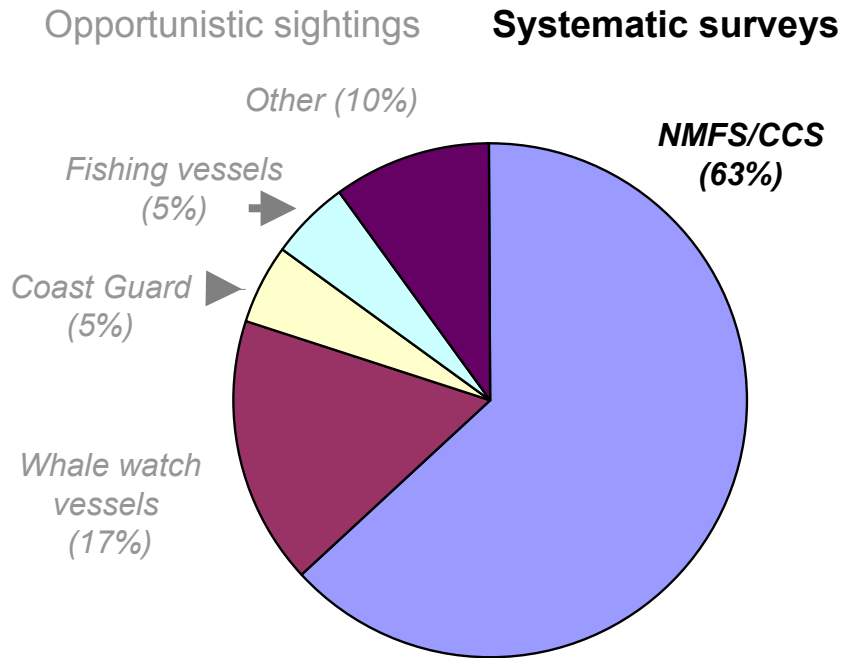
- ★ verifying reports

- ★ designating area buffers around sighting locations

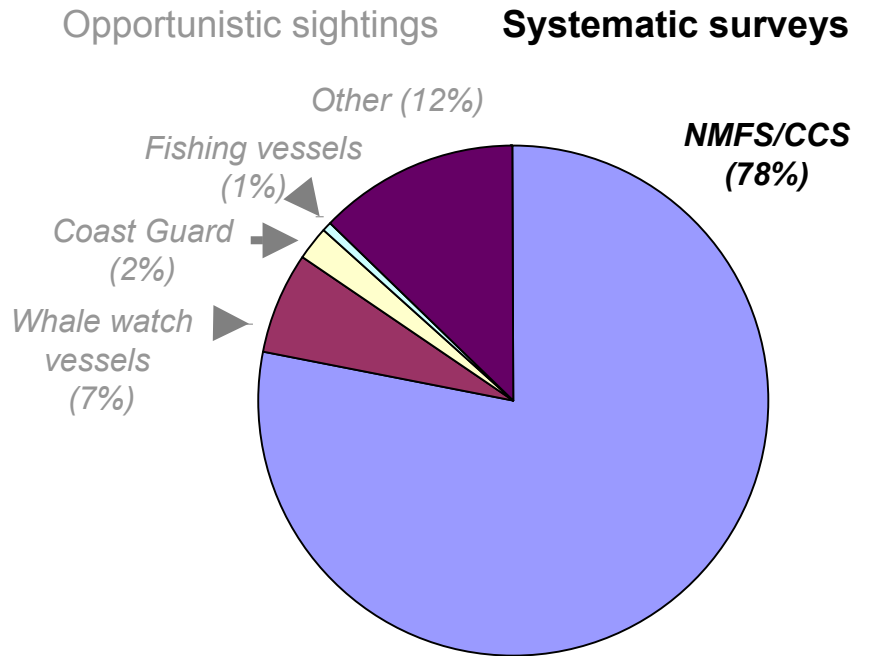
Distributing sighting advisories

Collecting sighting reports

Report sources 11/99 - 8/01



Report sources 1/02 - 8/02
(240 reports)



Report verification

No alerts are sent out without first verifying right whale sighting reports

A report is considered verified if:

The report is made by a marine mammal expert or an otherwise experienced marine mammal observer

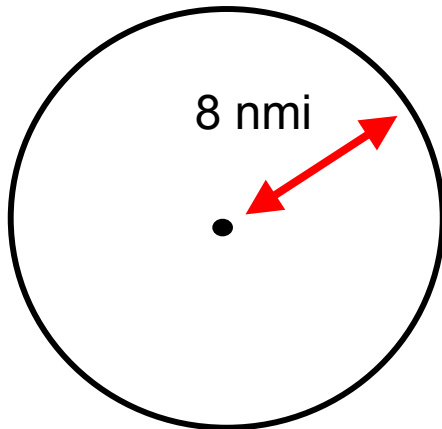
The report is deemed reliable by a marine mammal expert following an interview of the reporter

- ➔ Training
- ➔ Experience

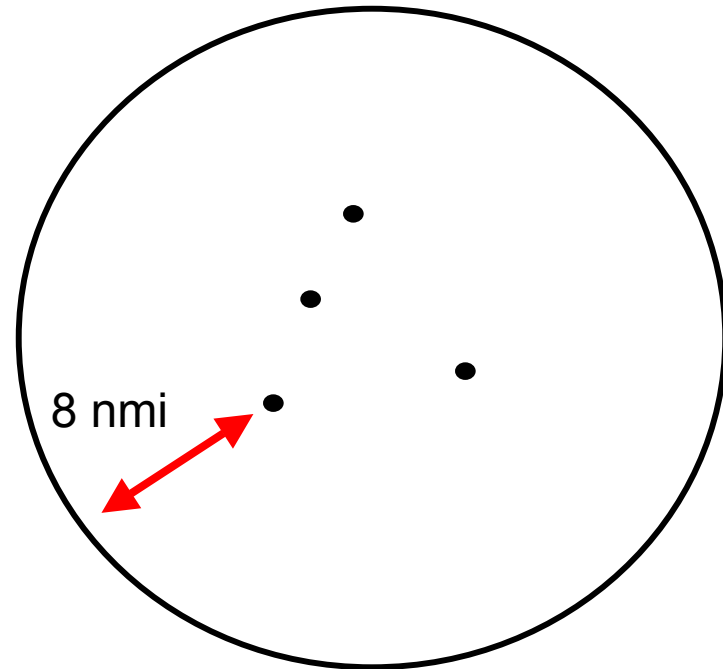
Area buffers around sightings

Currently using 8 n.mile buffer as the standard

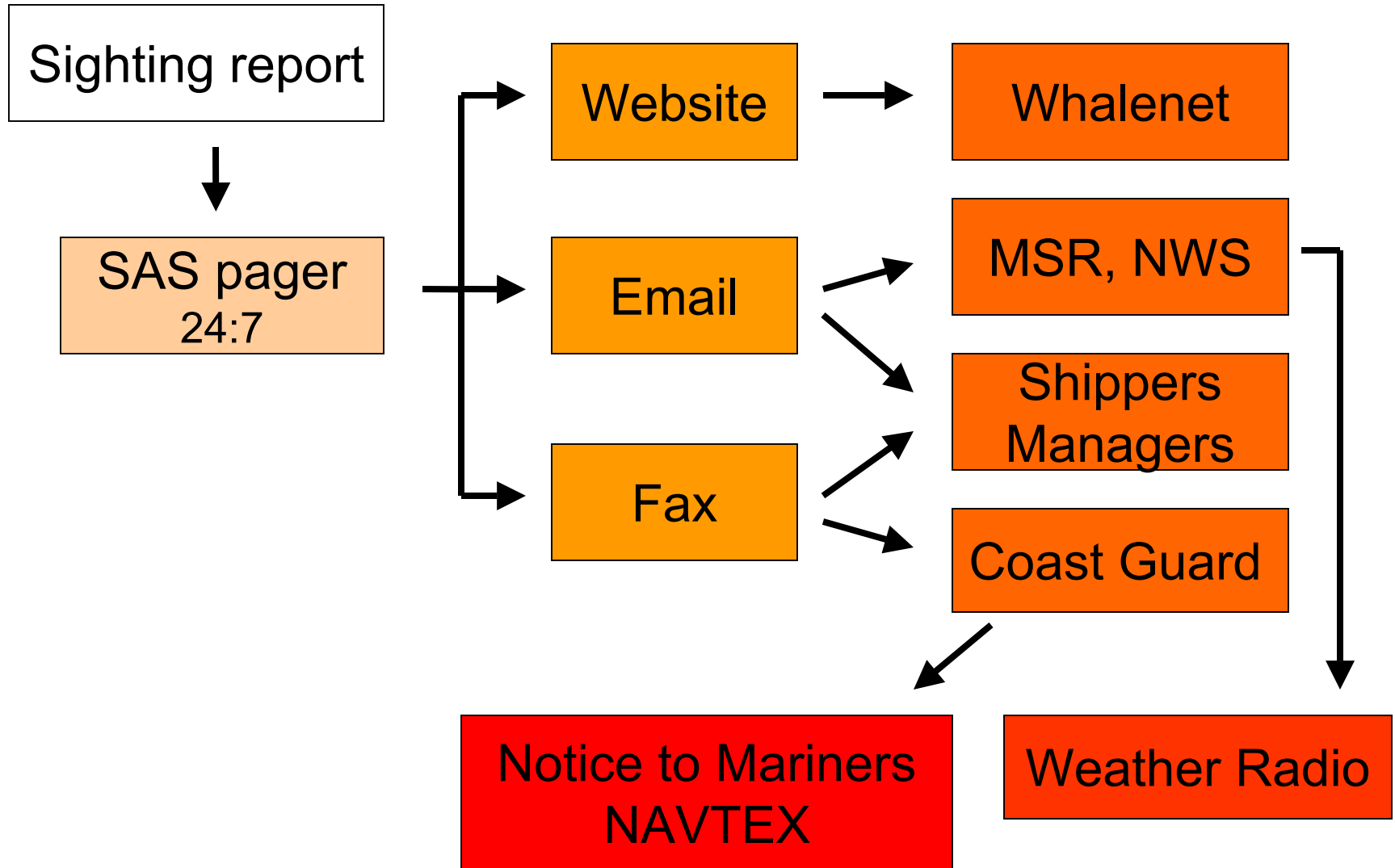
Single sighting location



Multiple sighting locations



Processing sighting reports



Fax



Right Whale Alert



TO:

FROM: NOAA Fisheries - Tel. Pager 978-585-8473

DATE: 09/01/02 06:18 PM EST

COMMENTS:

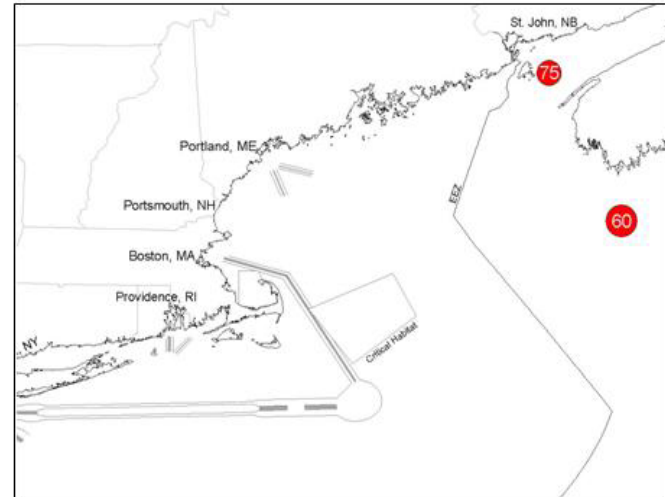
75 RIGHT WHALES SIGHTED BY SHIPBOARD SURVEYS NEAR THE BAY OF FUNDY TRAFFIC LANES, OR IN A 8 NM RADIUS AROUND POSITION 44-38N 66-28W

60 RIGHT WHALES SIGHTED BY AN AERIAL SURVEY 40 NM SOUTH OF CAPE SABLE, NOVA SCOTIA, OR IN A 12 NM RADIUS AROUND POSITION 42-49N 65-35W

THESE CONCENTRATIONS ARE LIKELY TO PERSIST THROUGH SEPTEMBER 15. FOLLOW UP SURVEYS WILL BE ATTEMPTED BY SEPTEMBER 15.

Mariners are urged to keep a sharp lookout and use caution around right whales.

PAGES (Including Cover): 2



Right Whale Zones for September 01, 2002

NOTE: These zones likely to persist through Sept. 15. Follow up surveys will be attempted by September 15.



NOAA Fisheries
Northeast Fisheries Science Center
Woods Hole, MA

Fax recipients

SAS Fax recipients, by type:

34 shipping industry contacts
21 federal or state officials
14 interested parties
11 Distribution partners
07 "uncertain"
04 SAS partners

Distribution partners include:

NOAA radio - 1

USCG - 6

ACOE - 1

CC Canal traffic control - 1

NWS - 1

whalenet - 1

Shipping industry contacts:

shippers - 13

agents - 5

pilots - 5

tow companies - 4

port authorities - 2

associations - 2

ferry - 1

builder - 1

other - 1

Shipping contacts located in:

Massachusetts - 11

Maine - 6

NY - 4

NJ - 3

Virginia - 3

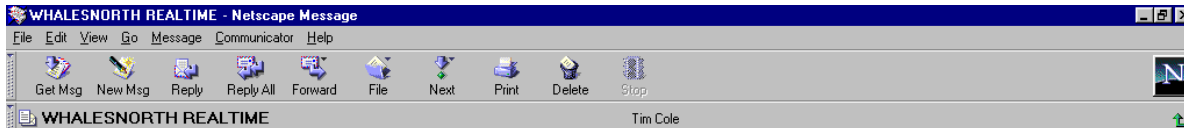
Canada - 2

NH - 1

Connecticut - 1

Georgia - 1

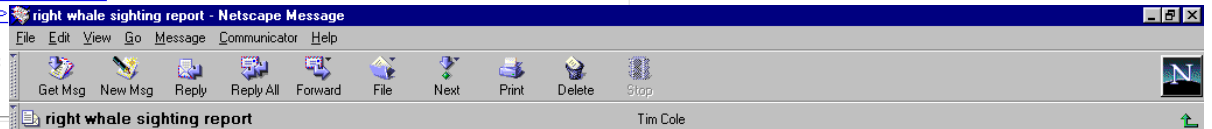
Email



Subject: WHALESNORTH REALTIME
Date: Fri, 18 Jan 2002 18:32:06 -0500
From: [Tim Cole <tc@whsun1.wh.who.edu>](mailto:tc@whsun1.wh.who.edu)
Reply-To: Tim Cole@noaa.gov
Organization: National Marine Fisheries Service
To: "[Greg Silber](mailto:Greg Silber@noaa.gov)" <Greg Silber@noaa.gov>, [RClark <RClark@comdt.uscg.mil>](mailto:RClark@comdt.uscg.mil),
[MSR_UPDATE <MSR_UPDATE@RightWhalesMSR.com>](mailto:MSR_UPDATE@RightWhalesMSR.com)

Right whales were sighted at: 4202N 06958W 1900z 18 Jan 02
known to occur in Cape Cod Bay from Jan - Apr.

[tc@whsun1.wh.who.edu](#)
Name: tc@whsun1.wh.who.edu
Type: VCard (text/x-vcard)
Encoding: 7bit
Description: Card for Tim Cole



Subject: right whale sighting report
Date: Fri, 18 Jan 2002 18:36:25 -0500
From: Tim Cole <tc@whsun1.wh.who.edu>
Reply-To: Tim Cole@noaa.gov
Organization: National Marine Fisheries Service
To: "[Tim Cole](mailto:Tim Cole <Tim Cole@noaa.gov>)" <Tim Cole@noaa.gov>, [irvingarctic <irvingarctic@super-hub.com>](mailto:irvingarctic@super-hub.com), [irvingcanada <irvingcanada@super-hub.com>](mailto:irvingcanada@super-hub.com),
[irvingskimo <irvingskimo@super-hub.com>](mailto:irvingskimo@super-hub.com), [wellingtonkent <wellingtonkent@super-hub.com>](mailto:wellingtonkent@super-hub.com), [severn/omi <severn/omi@rydex.com>](mailto:severn/omi@severn/omi@rydex.com),
[dispatcher <dispatcher@bouchardtransport.com>](mailto:dispatcher@bouchardtransport.com), "master matt" <master matt@hoeigh.no>, master <master@cslatlas.seaservices.net>,
[gypsumbaron <gypsumbaron@super-hub.com>](mailto:gypsumbaron@super-hub.com), [gypsumking <gypsumking@super-hub.com>](mailto:gypsumking@super-hub.com), "master nlad" <master nlad@hoeigh.no>,
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[rmeiczinger <rmeiczinger@americanaships.com>](mailto:rmeiczinger@americanaships.com), [bmolero <bmolero@amencanaships.com>](mailto:bmolero@amencanaships.com), [380rochest <380rochest@maersk.com>](mailto:380rochest@380rochest@maersk.com),
[bruce <bruce@longislandferry.com>](mailto:bruce@longislandferry.com), [rudderwhll <rudderwhll@aol.com>](mailto:rudderwhll@aol.com), [dispatch <dispatch@NEMarinepilots.com>](mailto:dispatch@NEMarinepilots.com),
[rcomeau <rcomeau@mpn.org>](mailto:rcomeau@mpn.org), [pealane <pealane@gateway.net>](mailto:pealane@pealane@gateway.net), [nspec <nspec@iuno.com>](mailto:nspec@nspec@iuno.com), [northernstar <northernstar@mcimail.com>](mailto:northernstar@northernstar@mcimail.com),
"kcou bridge" <kcou bridge@stratosnet.com>, "kspr bridge" <kspr bridge@stratosnet.com>,
"kexp bridge" <kexp bridge@stratosnet.com>, [bayincat046 <bayincat046@acadia.net>](mailto:bayincat046@bayincat046@acadia.net),
[Elizabeth Pomfret <Elizabeth Pomfret@noaa.gov>](mailto:Elizabeth Pomfret@noaa.gov)

A mariner reported sighting 1 right whale in the vicinity
of Highland Light, Truro, Massachusetts.

US-SEACOAST- CAPE COD, IN THE VICINITY OF HIGHLAND LIGHT, TRURO

ENDANGERED NORTHERN RIGHT WHALES ARE KNOWN TO BE PRESENT IN THE
FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:

IN THE VICINITY OF TRURO, MASSACHUSETTS OR IN A 8 NM RADIUS AROUND
POSITION
42-02N 069-58W.

MARINERS ARE URGED TO MAINTAIN A SHARP LOOKOUT AND USE CAUTION AROUND
RIGHT WHALES. APPROACH CLOSER THAN 500 YARDS IS PROHIBITED AND MAY
RESULT IN A VIOLATION OF FEDERAL OR STATE LAW.


Website

NOAA Right Whale/Ship Survey-WhaleNet - Netscape

File Edit View Go Communicator Help

Back Forward Reload Home Search Netscape Print Security Stop

Bookmarks Location: http://whale.wheelock.edu/whalenet-stuff/reportsRW_NE/01/rw_survey08_01.html What's Related

 **NOAA/NMFS**
Right Whale Sighting Advisory System (SAS)

CONCENTRATIONS OF ENDANGERED NORTHERN RIGHT WHALES ARE KNOWN TO BE PRESENT IN CAPE COD BAY. SIGHTINGS HAVE BEEN MADE IN THE AREA BOUNDED BY THE FOLLOWING COORDINATES.

Mariners are urged to maintain a sharp lookout and use caution around right whales. Intentional close approach is prohibited and may result in violation of federal or state law.

(Pages maintained and donated by [Michael Williamson](#), [WhaleNet](#))

Locations and Maps					Reports:
Date	Lat N	Long W	Radius (nm)	Map	
8/4/01	44 04	67 20	11	Map	8/4/01 - The high speed ferry out of Bar Harbor, ME reported sighting a single adult right whale southeast of Mt. Desert Island.
8/8/01	42 25	67 13	14	Map	
8/11/01	44 39	66 25	14	Map	8/8/01 - The Coast Guard reported sighting 2 right whales north of the northern edge of Georges Bank.
8/12/01	44 40	66 26	14	Map	
8/13/01	44 37	66 26	14	Map	8/11/01 - The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) R/V Delaware II reported sighting 30 right whales east of Grand Manan Island in the Bay of Fundy.
8/14/01	44 42	66 22	15	Map	
8/15/01	44 39	66 29	10.8	Map	8/12/01 - The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) R/V Delaware II reported sighting 30 right whales east of Grand Manan Island and west of the outbound Bay of Fundy Traffic Lanes.
8/16/01	44 36 41 56	66 25 66 35	14 11	Map	
8/20/01	44 39 40 51	66 26 66 59	14 11	Map	8/12/01 - The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) R/V Delaware II reported sighting 30 right whales east of Grand Manan Island and west of the outbound Bay of Fundy Traffic Lanes.
8/25/01	42 56	65 20	14	Map	

Document: Done

Critical Sightings Program



NMFS CRISP: Critical Sightings Program

Please help the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) collect vital information on right whales, and dead, entangled, or injured whales of any species by contacting either the Northeast or Southeast Regional hotlines **immediately** when critical sightings are made. Images of critical sightings are extremely valuable. **Please make taking video or photographs a priority.**

Reporting Strategy

For any critical sighting be prepared with the following information:

- ✓ Time and location of the sighting
- ✓ Distinctive features of the animal and its estimated length
- ✓ Signs of injury or entanglement
- ✓ Description of behavior and injuries
- ✓ If the whale is dead, the condition of the carcass
- ✓ How you can be contacted

In the **Southeast Region** (includes the Gulf of Mexico) report all critical sightings by calling this pager: **305-862-2850**. Report right whale sightings **only** in the **FACSFACJAX Area** by calling **904-542-2004**.

In the **Northeast Region** call the appropriate pager:

Entangled whales: **800-900-3622**
Dead, ship-struck or injured whales: **978-585-7149**
Right whale sightings: **978-585-8473**

In both Regions, reports can also be relayed through U.S. Coast Guard stations

Identifying Right Whales

Several features should be observed to confirm species identification. These may include:

- ✓ Rough white patches ("callosities") on head
- ✓ Dorsal fin absent when the whale arches on a dive (but be cautious—other species may not show their dorsal fin until they arch up for a deep dive)
- ✓ Flukes have smooth trailing edges and taper gradually to narrow pointy tips (only right whales, humpbacks and sperm whales routinely lift their tails when diving)
- ✓ Distinct "V" shaped blow when viewed from directly behind or head on (but not from the side)



Right whale flukes n/a/c/p/s/a



Humpback flukes n/a/c/p/s/a



Right whale "V" shaped blow n/a/c/p/s/a



Blow of other species such as H. Noca, C. C. C.



Right whale aerial view n/a/c/p/s/a



Right whale head showing "callosities" n/a/c/p/s/a

From the air, right whales are best identified by the presence of the callosities on the head. Their body shape is more robust than other whale species, and the flukes are proportionally larger. The flippers are typically hard to see.

Northeast Region: ME - VA and offshore north of 36°35'N
Southeast Region: TX - NC and offshore south of 36°35'N

FACSFACJAX area (33°00'N to 28°00'N out to 78°30'W)

Right Whale Critical Habitat areas:

Great South Channel: 41°00'N, 69°05'W;

41°42'N, 69°42'W; 42°10'N, 68°31'W; 41°38'N, 68°13'W

Cape Cod Bay: 42°04'N, 70°10'W; 42°12'N, 70°15'W;

42°12'N, 70°30'W; 41°46'N, 70°30'W

Southeast: 31°15'N to 30°15'N & offshore 15 nm;

30°15'N to 28°00'N & offshore 5 nm

"Right whales follow a migratory path close to shore along the entire U.S. eastern seaboard. This migration is primarily in the early spring and late fall. See the U.S. Coast Pilot for more information on right whale distribution throughout the year and the Mandatory Ship Reporting (MSR) systems in both the Southeast and Northeast Regions.

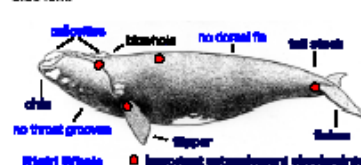
Spotting Entangled Whales

Spotting entangled whales requires careful observation. Whenever a whale is sighted, look for buoys or lines moving or unusually clumped near the whale or trailing some distance behind. Gear may also be seen wrapped over the whale's back, flippers, tail stock, or through the mouth.

Photographs or video of an entanglement are extremely valuable, especially when they document areas where the gear is entangled on the whale

Be sure to stay well clear of an entangled whale to avoid spooking it or running over any trailing gear.

The right whale illustration below shows both important entanglement checkpoints, and the primary body features mentioned. Key right whale features are highlighted in blue font.



Identifying Dead Whale Species at Sea

Whale carcasses are typically seen floating belly up. Due to predation and weathering, carcasses may differ significantly from the pictures below. Rely on described body structures for identification. If possible, closely examine the carcass for signs of injuries, such as gashes, bruises, or line marks.

Video or photographs are extremely valuable, especially close ups of the areas around the tail stock, flukes, flippers, and any injuries

Dead right whales

- ✓ Throat grooves absent (belly may have white patches or be completely black)
- ✓ Flippers squarish in shape and, when the whale is belly-up, both may be up out of the water
- ✓ If floating on its side, note strongly arched mouth that contains long (6+ foot) baleen



Dead right whale (belly closest) n/a/c/p/s/a



Dead right whale (head to the left) n/a/c/p/s/a



Dead right whale aerial (white marks on back are gull-related) Center for Coastal Studies

Dead humpback whales

- ✓ Throat grooves present
- ✓ Flippers white and about 1/3 the length of the body with knobby bumps on front edge
- ✓ Trailing edge of tail flukes ragged-looking with large barnacles on tips
- ✓ Several grapefruit-sized knobby black bumps on chin and snout



Dead humpback whale (head to the left) n/a/c/p/s/a

Dead finback whales

- ✓ Throat grooves present (narrower and more numerous than on humpbacks)
- ✓ Flippers smooth, slender and fairly short
- ✓ Tail flukes have smooth trailing edges and taper to narrow pointy tips
- ✓ Chin smooth and relatively slender



Dead finback whale (head to the right) n/a/c/p/s/a

Dead minke whales are physically similar to finbacks, but are smaller (less than 30 feet long) and their throat grooves do not extend as far aft

A good reference for identifying other species is [Guide to Marine Mammals & Birds of the U.S. Atlantic & Gulf of Mexico](#), (c) 1999, Rhode Island Sea Grant. To order, phone 401-314-6542.

(space below provided for sighting notes)

Time:

Location (lat/long):

(continued on back)

CRISP objectives

Provide both Federal and State agencies with a standard, streamlined reporting protocol for sightings critical to marine mammal science and management

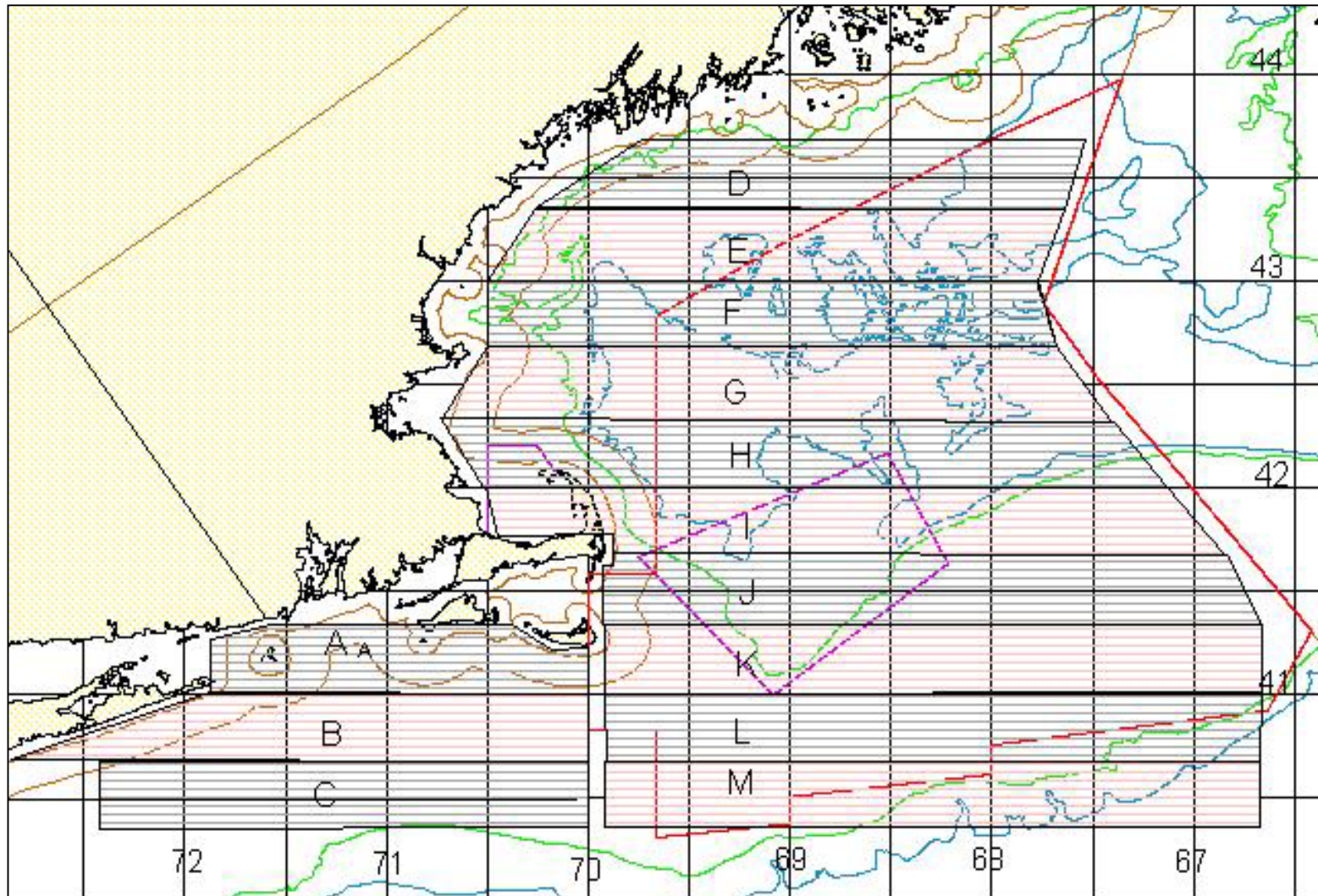
Improve reporting quality by:

- Providing an at sea guide for right whale identification

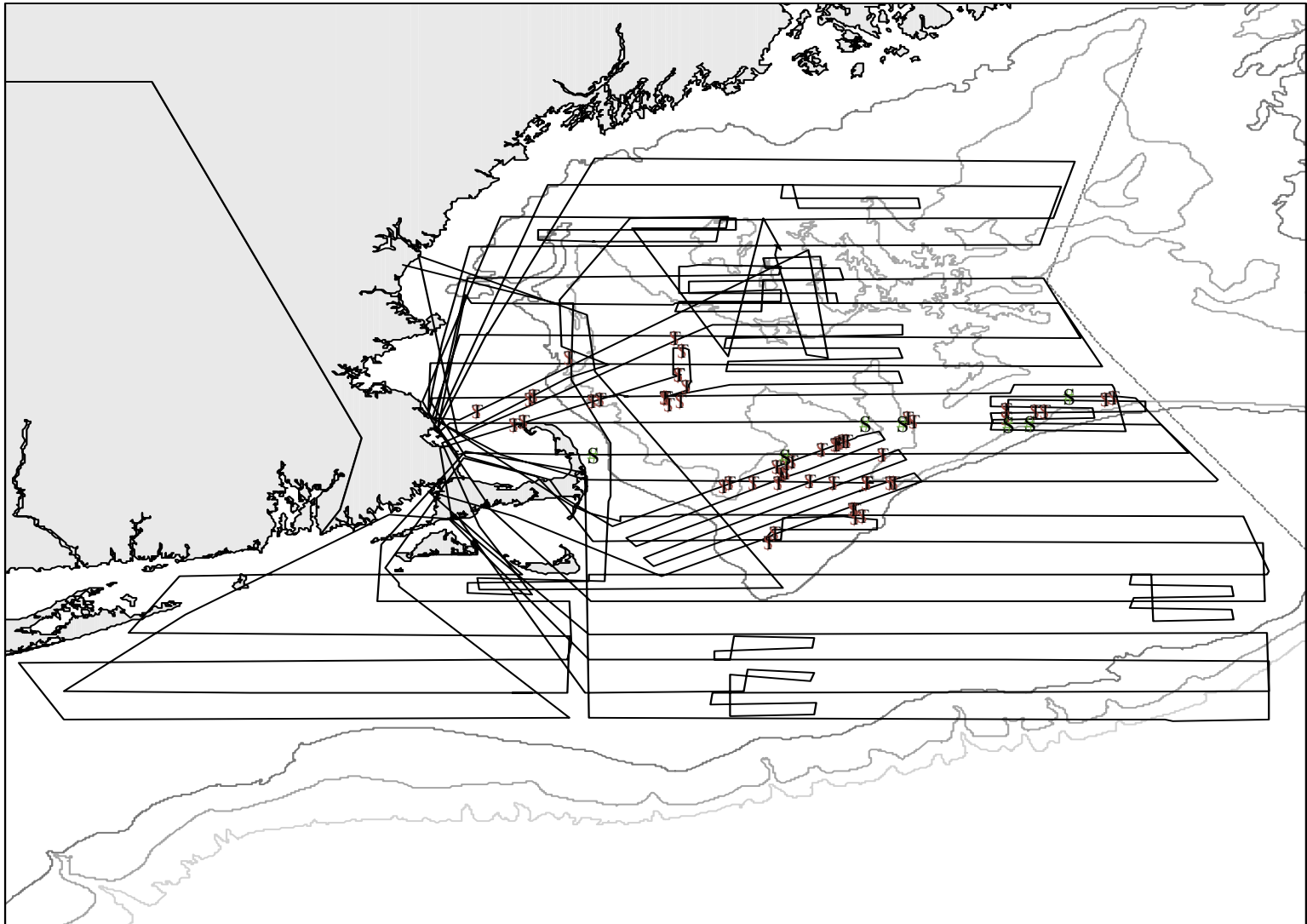
- Providing guidelines for spotting, reporting and monitoring large whales entangled in fishing gear

- Providing an at sea guide for distinguishing dead right whales from other species of large whales

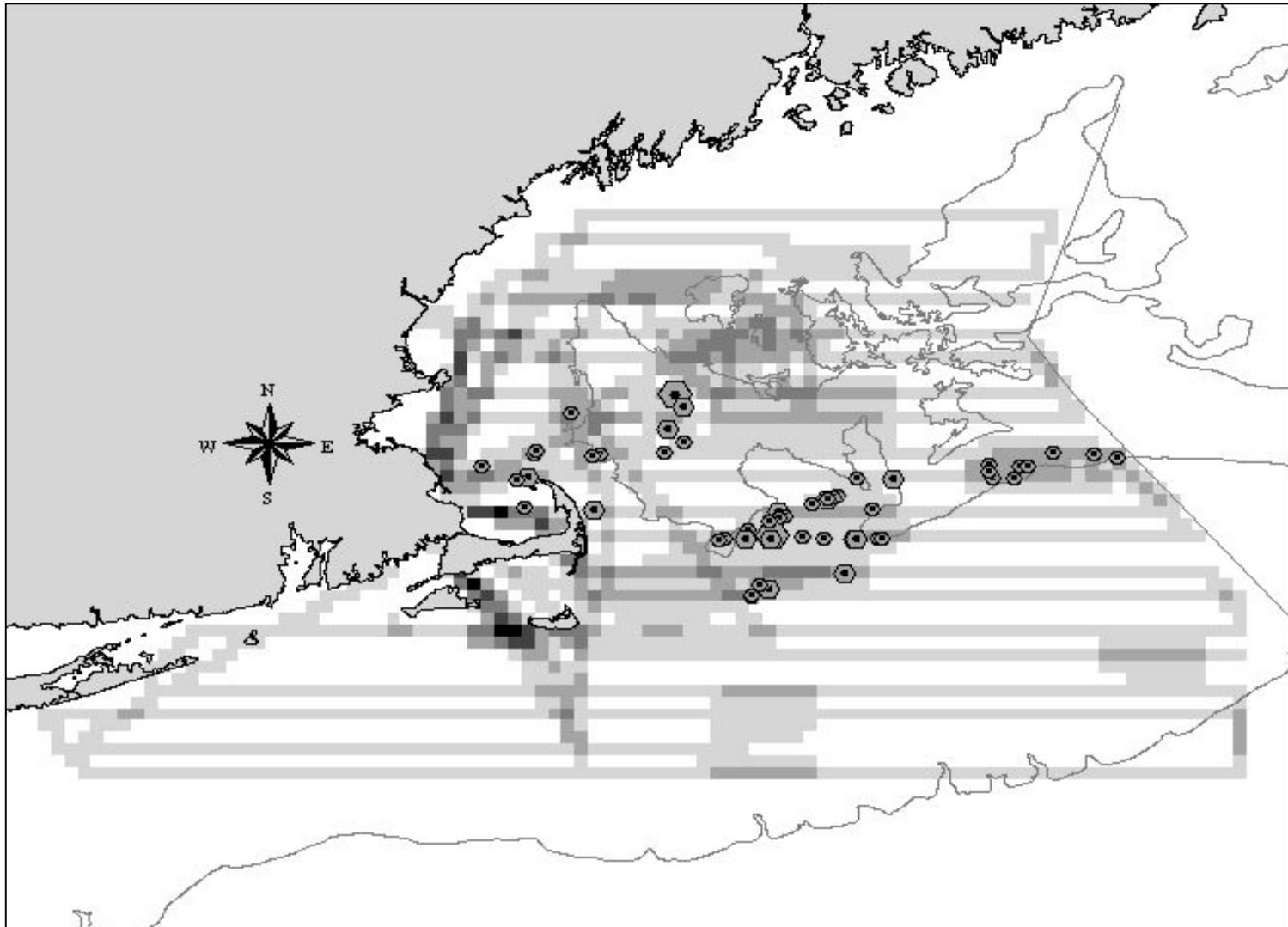
Broad scale survey scheme



2001 Fisheries Science Center coverage (April - June)



2001 Cumulative effort and right whale sightings



2002 Aerial Survey Summary

March 15 – July 15, 2002

	TWIN OTTER	GOOSE	TOTAL
Total # survey days	56	17	73
Time on effort (hrs)	228	68	296
Total nautical miles on effort	15900	5100	21000
% of total on Broadscale	31%	58%	38%
Total # of Right Whales encountered = 815			

Current Information Objectives

1. Improve knowledge of annual and inter-annual right whale distribution
2. Identify primary mechanisms affecting right whale distribution
3. Predict occurrence of right whale aggregations
4. Improve knowledge of ship distribution